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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 000746

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA AND FOR S/P

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/24/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: JORDAN SEEKS DIALOGUE WITH S/P ON "QUINT GROUP"

REF: 08 CAIRO 2503

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (U) This cable contains an action request in para 4.

12. (C) MFA Director of Policy Planning and Research Omar Nahar has inquired whether the U.S. is interested in continuing the Middle East Quintet Policy Planning Dialogue initiated under former S/P Director David Gordon. He proposed coordinating with S/P Anne-Marie Slaughter before a date is set. (Note: The first "Quint Group" meeting took place on November 18 in Cairo and brought together policy planners and equivalents from the U.S., Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Per reftel, the consultations yielded a comprehensive dialogue on a range of regional issues and all participants expressed enthusiasm for continuing the dialogue. Nahar led the GOJ delegation, and the GOJ offered at that time to host the next session. End Note.)

13. (C) Speaking with PolOff on March 12, Nahar reiterated Jordan's desire to host a follow-on to the Cairo meeting, hopefully this spring. However, he proposed establishing a direct line of communication in advance between himself and S/P Slaughter. He hoped to discuss the agenda and better understand U.S. priorities given the change in Administration before setting a date for the next conference. Nahar greatly appreciated the professional relationship he had developed with Gordon and hoped to renew a similar relationship with Dr. Slaughter to "develop ideas to try to pursue on the non-public track." Should Dr. Slaughter be in Jordan, Nahar has offered to host her for an informal meal.

14. (C) Action Request: With Department approval, Post will convey the level of U.S. interest in the Quint process and stands ready to facilitate contact between Nahar and Dr. Slaughter if that is desired.

Biographical Note

15. (C) Nahar has been in his post since 2007 and was the first at the MFA to hold the position. He has described himself as a "hired gun" for the Foreign Minister, dealing with issues on an ad hoc basis with the goal of "invigorating new thinking" on policy. He has become our main interlocutor on Mughrabi Gate issues, a matter on which he has served as the GOJ's interagency pointman. Early in his tenure, Nahar expressed an interest in learning about "best practices" for similar positions in other foreign ministries, including the State Department, and subsequently met with S/P David Gordon during two of his visits to Jordan. Before taking up his present position, Nahar served as Director of the Political Department at the Office of the Prime Minister. Prior to that, he was Director of the Office of the Minister of the

Royal Hashemite Court for two years (but was swept out along with his boss, Samir Rifai, in a 2005 shakeup of the King's team). As a career diplomat, Nahar served at the Jordanian Embassy in London (2000-2004), headed up the MFA's Israel Desk (1999-2000), and was one of the two Jordanian diplomats to open the Embassy in Tel Aviv, where he stayed until 1999. Nahar attended the University of Jordan (1986-1990) where he received a BSc in Political Science and Business. He is a heavy cigar smoker who used to smoke cigarettes, and suffers from episodes of gout. He speaks English well, but occasionally fumbles for a technical term. Nahar and his wife, Hiba, have two children. End Biographical Note.

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